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commissie justitia et pax nederland

His Eminence
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den haag. May 28, 1986

Your Eminence,

The Commission Justitia et Pax Nederland is paying close attention to the situation in East Timor since 1984, and will go on advocating the improvement of the human rights situation on the eastern part of this island which was occupied by Indonesia in December 1975.

In May 1984 the Commission published its East Timor report, which was translated in English and published in a some what condensed form by Pro Mundi Vita.
Recently, the Commission published an updated dossier: East Timor, the most important developments since (medio) 1983. I enclose a copy of the typescript of this dossier, for your information.

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We were informed that during an informal meeting of the Pontifical Commission Iustitia et Pax on 7 November 1985 and during the general meeting on 8 November 1985, mr.Frans Seda from Indonesia has given his view and opinion regarding East Timor. Copy of his report is enclosed.

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The Dutch Commission Justitia et Pax cannot share mr.Seda's opinion on certain prints, and so we would like to present your Eminence our comment on mr.Frans Seda's report.

We shall continue our work on East Timor, together with other Justice and Peace Commissions, in the line of the statement of His Holiness Pope John Paul II about the role of the church in defending the ethnic, cultural and religious identity of the people.

Yours devotedly in Christ,

Philo Weijenborg-Pot
president

Some remarks on 'East Timor', report of the view and opinion presented by Frans Seda in the informal meeting on 7-11-'85 and in the general meeting on 8-11-'85 of the Pontifical Commission Justitia et Pax.

1. The author criticizes the lack of referenpe to sources (7.2) in many reports on East Timor. However, in his own report a reference to sources is seriously missed in several important places, e.g.
   - "Catholic organizations and magazins" are seriously criticized several times (see 7.1, 7.3, 10.2 and 11), but which organizations and which publications are meant is nowhere described (except Missioni Consolata, anno 87° 5/1975).
   - in proof of the lack of "domestic support" for the Fretilin the author asserts'people who are critical towards the Indonesian Government told me that Fretilin's concept and idea never lived in the minds and hearts of the population' (7.3). The author does not tell who those people are.

2. The description of the events is very imcomplete in various places: e.g.
   - "After waiting for months for the U.N.response for the system of free choice act of self-determination....." (4.1.). The U.N.did give an answer in the form of various resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly in 1975 and 1976, which disapproved the Indonesian behaviour (see Pro Mundi Vita dossier, p.12).
   - "An approach of persuasion and amnesty and pardon is used...." (6). Not is mentioned that the Indonesian army did not comply with its own amnesty-offer (PMV dossier p.16)
   - the author acknowledges on several places that "mistakes have been made by the Indonesian army" (7.3 and 9.4). It is nowhere made clear what these mistakes consist of. (see remark 3).
   - "Political prisoners in Atauro.....have been released" (8.2). That is true, but there is no mention of about 1000 people still detained on Atauro.

3. The recent serious accusations about executions, disappearances and torturing are not mentioned at all and remain completely undiscussed (see among others: East Timor, the most important developments since (medio) 1983, p.13).

4. Justitia et Pax-Nederland can certainly not share certain estimations of the author.
   - The author remarks on "Destruction of East Timorese history culture and religion":"It has no ground at all! It is not according to experiences in other parts of Indonesia"(9.1). However, the experience in Irian Jaya is different; Justitia et Pax-Nederland has already remarked about this in a report of 1982:"the Papuans should be considered in many respects a minority in their own country "The developments after 1982 have strengthened the commission in this opinion. Mgr.Belo and the Presbyterian Council remark in their message of January 1, 1985 "L'Eglise.....sent avec angoisse s'accomplir des évènements qui conduisent lentement à l'extinction ethnique, culturelle et religieuse". Also via other sources Justitia et Pax is informed on the Indonesianization of East Timor in a high tempo (7)

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- "Fretilin guerilla's existence so far is by leniency of Government and by virtue of the mistakes made by the Government. Not by their own virtue or by virtue of their cause and people's support" (9.4), Elsewhere too the author points to "Lack of domestic support' (7.3) for the Fretilin. Mgr.Belo and the Presbyterian Council remark about this "Tout cela sera-t-il seulement la manifestation d'un groupe ou d'une minorite' obstinée ou révèlera-t-il quelque chose de plus profond sur l'exigence d'un peuple à ses droits fondementaux?" (p.35, East Timor, the most important developments since (medio) 1983).